

REMARKS

By the present amendment, independent claim 10 has been amended to further clarify the concepts of the present invention. Support for some of the amendments to claim 10 may be found, among other places, on lines 10-27 of page 39 and Examples 1-3 and 5 of the subject specification. Entry of these amendments is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, claims 10-15 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the patent to Kitamura et al in view of the patents to Igarashi et al or Sato et al. In addition, claim 16 was rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the same patents to Kitamura et al, Igarashi et al and Sato et al in view of the patent to Nakatani et al.

Furthermore, claims 10-15 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the newly cited patent to Liu et al in view of the previously cited patents to Igarashi et al or Sato et al. In addition, claim 16 was rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the same patents to Kitamura et al, Igarashi et al and Sato et al in view of the patent to Nakatani et al. In making this latter two rejections, it was asserted that the cited Liu et al patent, like the Kitamura et al patent used in the first two rejections, teaches an ink jet recording sheet as claimed except for the specific cationic resin. The Igarashi et al patent is then relied upon for teaching a cationic resin as claimed.

In particular, it is asserted that it is the same resin as identified by tradename that is used in cited patent as is disclosed in the subject specification. Reconsideration of these rejection in view of the above claim amendments and the following comments are respectfully requested.

In the ink jet recording sheet as claimed in independent claim 10, the specific silica pigment-cationic resin composite fine particles as defined and contained in the ink receiving layer exhibit excellent dispersing property and dispersion stability and enable the subject ink receiving layer to exhibit high ink absorption properties and a high gloss. In addition, the silica pigment-cationic resin composite fine particles in the ink receiving layer enable the recorded ink images on the ink receiving layer to exhibit a high water resistance, excellent resistance to wet blotting and excellent clarity comparable to that of silver salt photographic images.

In particular, the wet blotting resistance of the recorded images is significant and specifically the ink jet recording sheet as claimed exhibits substantially no blotting of the ink after the ink images-recorded ink jet recording sheet is stored in an environmental testing room at a temperature of 35 °C at a relative humidity of 85% for 2 days. It is submitted that the specific effect of the ink jet recording sheet having an enhanced resistance of the recorded ink images to wet blotting is not taught or suggested by the cited patents.

More particularly, the cited patents disclose ink jet recording sheets capable of receiving ink images having a high water resistance. However, the cited patents are completely silent as to resistance of the recorded ink images to blotting of the recorded ink images in a high humidity environment such as a high humidity atmosphere at a relative humidity of 85% at a temperature of 35 °C. Consequently, it is submitted that the cited patents do not teach or suggest to one of ordinary skill in the art how to enable recorded ink images to exhibit high blotting resistance in a high humidity atmosphere as presently claimed.

It is further submitted that one of ordinary skill the art would not be led to combine the teachings of the separate patents to achieve the presently claimed invention. In particular, it must be emphasized in support of the patentability of the subject invention over the teachings of the cited patents is that none of these patents provides a suggestion to motivate one of ordinary skill in the art to combine their teachings in the manner proposed in the rejection. It is well established principle of U.S. patent practice that the prior art must contain some suggestion for combination since without such, any combination is pure speculation and is based on a prohibited hindsight reconstruction from applicants' own disclosure.

Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) and allowance of newly added claims 10-16 over the cited patents are respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that the subject application is now in condition for allowance and early notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

In the event this paper is not timely filed, the undersigned hereby petitions for an appropriate extension of time. The fee for this extension may be charged to Deposit Account No. 01-2340, along with any other additional fees which may be required with respect to this paper.

Respectfully submitted,

KRATZ, QUINTOS & HANSON, LLP



Donald W. Hanson  
Attorney for Applicants  
Reg. No. 27,133

Atty. Docket No. 031119  
Suite 400, 1420 K Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20005  
(202) 659-2930  
DWH/rab



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